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CHILDREN'S BOOK
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*Her Father was reading the Bible aloud to her. Mother
who was seated in the window at work &c !*

London Published by Harvey & Darton, 1825.

THE
POOR CHILD'S
FRIEND:

CONSISTING OF
NARRATIVES FOUNDED ON FACT,
AND
RELIGIOUS AND MORAL
SUBJECTS.

London:

PRINTED FOR HARVEY AND DARTON,
55, GRACECHURCH-STREET.

1825.

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THE
POOR CHILD'S FRIEND,
&c.

JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God, our most blessed Saviour, loved little children. He called them to him; he took them in his arms, and blessed them. Children! you who have read this passage in the New Testament, have you not felt your hearts glow with love towards the divine author of your salvation? and have you not wished that, like these happy children, you too could go to him and receive his blessing? But this cannot

be. Christ no longer appears upon earth. But you can go into your own chamber : you can kneel humbly down, and with your whole heart pray for his blessing, and it will as surely be given you, as if you could behold your Saviour ; for though you cannot see him, he sees you at all times, and will always be ready to give his blessing to those who sincerely desire it.

Consider seriously, this is the most important period of your lives ; for it is most probable that just such children as you are, just such men and women you will be. A good boy will make a good man. And this is the time when your services will be most acceptable to God. He loves those who call upon him early ; and those who give up for his sake, while

young, the pleasures of this world, he will take care of when they are old, and the world gives them up. "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

HALF-A-CROWN.

ONE very warm afternoon, as farmer Joslin was walking in his fields, he observed a boy, the son of one of his labourers, lying under the shade of a large oak tree. The boy was lying all along upon his back: his hat was just tipt on his head, to shade the light from his eyes: with one hand he was plucking the blades of grass that grew beside him, and in the

other he held the hoe with which he ought to have been at work. As he was half whistling, half singing, as he lay with his heels kicking in the air, the farmer was close up to him before he was perceived. "How is this? what is the matter, Philip?" said Mr. Joslin: "why are you not at work?" At the sound of his master's voice the boy started, and jumping up, stammered out, "that he was tired, and that his head ached: the weather was so hot, it made it ache." "Tired, and the heat makes your head ache!" repeated the farmer, as though he was thinking: "how is it that others work? Do you not think that the other boys, who are hoeing yonder, find the weather as hot as you do?" "I do not know," replied Philip; "but I really am sadly tired:

I was so, soon after I began to work in the morning." "Well," said Mr. Joslin, "put on your hat, and take up your hoe, (do not leave it lying there,) and follow me: you are not too tired to play or be amused, I dare say. Do you think you can walk with me, to see something that will entertain you." "O dear! yes," cried Philip, his face brightening with pleasure; "that I can: I do not feel at all tired now." "And your head," enquired Mr. Joslin, "how is that?" "Oh! that does not ache now, at least very little," replied Philip, half smiling and half ashamed.

As they walked on, Mr. Joslin enquired of Philip how long he thought he had been lying under the tree. "About half an hour, Sir, I think," answered Philip. "Half

an hour!—half an hour doing nothing!” exclaimed Mr. Joslin: “I do not wonder that you were tired.” “No, Sir, I was not tired then,” said Philip; “I was only tired when I worked; for when I was under the tree, I was very busy.” “Busy!” said Mr. Joslin; “you appeared to me to be quite unemployed when I came up.” “I was not about any thing, I know, Sir,” replied Philip; “but still I seemed very busy: I was thinking.”—“Humph!” said the farmer; “thinking! and pray what might it be about?” “I am afraid, Sir,” answered Philip, “that you will laugh if I tell you.” The farmer promised not to do that; and Philip told him that he had been thinking about playing at cricket—that he liked doing that better than any

thing else in the world—and that he wished he had a bat. “For if I had a bat of my own,” added he, “I should then play with the best players; for Tom Jones and Jack Brown will not lend theirs; and if I play with them, I can only bowl. Now, if I had a bat of my own, I could do both—bat and bowl.”

Here Philip stopped short. “Well, go on, my man,” said Mr. Joslin: “you have not told me all.” “Why then, Sir,” continued Philip, “I kept thinking, and thinking, how I could possibly get a bat, till at last it struck me how lucky I should be if I could find half-a-crown, for then I could buy one; and I began to think where I could go and search about, in the hope of finding one; for Jem White found one once: and just

as you came up, I had fixed where I would go and look in the evening.” “Do you not think,” asked the farmer, “that it would be much better to try and earn half-a-crown? Besides, if you were to find a piece of money, it would not be your own.” “Not my own when I found it!” exclaimed Philip. “Certainly not,” replied Mr. Joslin: “no one throws money away; and you may be sure that some person has been so unlucky as to lose what you may find.” “But, Sir,” said Philip, after thinking a little while, “father takes the money you pay for my weeding; and it would be such a long while before I could earn half-a-crown for myself!” “Why that is true, Philip,” said Mr. Joslin, “if you always work as you have done to-day.”

They had now got nearly up to the farm-house where Mr. Joslin lived : he did not go into it, but turned towards the garden, and, opening the gate, they both entered. The grass-walk had just been mown and swept : the borders were full of beautiful flowers, and there was not a weed among them. The roses were coming into full blow ; fine rich carnations, and many kinds of pinks, were neatly tied up to small white sticks, placed in the ground to support them ; and honeysuckles, that climbed round the laburnums, perfumed the air with their sweetness. Philip was all delight. “ What beautiful flowers ! ” cried he : “ how sweet ! how pretty ! and how neat every thing is ! ” Philip thought he could not see enough ; but the farmer led him on

to another part of the garden, where the vegetables grew. "What a fine bed of cabbages!" exclaimed Philip; "and all planted so even: how good some of them would eat with a nice piece of fat bacon. And peas too, with pods already, and some of them, I declare, just ready to pick! Oh! and what a fine bed of radishes and young onions, and mustard and cress too, all coming up so thick and even."

They had now reached a part of the garden where, facing the south, was a high paling: in front was a bed of thyme, balm, and other fragrant herbs. Close by stood a beehouse; and in it, among the others, was a glass hive: so that those who looked through on the outside, could see the bees working within. The

farmer seated himself in a garden-chair that stood near at hand ; Philip stood by him ; and they both began to watch the bees at work in the glass hive. “ Does your father keep bees, Philip ? ” enquired Mr. Joslin. “ Yes, he has two hives,” replied Philip, and he says that he thinks he shall have more soon ; and I hope he will, for then there will be plenty of honey.” “ You like honey then, do you ? ” said Mr. Joslin. “ O yes, very much,” said Philip.

Philip continued watching the bees, and was so much amused that he did not speak for some time. At length he said, “ How curious it is to see them work ! how busy they all are ! I think they have quite filled the upper combs. How pretty it looks

to see them come flying home with that yellow load on their thighs ; and how pleasant it is to hear their soft humming noise. Some fly off to a distance, and some drop down on the flowers close by. They are always going and coming ; and yet, though they are so busy, and fly so fast, they never hit against each other, and there is no confusion among them. Is there any one, I wonder, that keeps them in order, and tells them what to do ?”

“ Yes,” answered Mr. Joslin, “ there is one chief bee among them, that is called their queen : they all work for her as well as for themselves, and obey her orders.” “ Then,” observed Philip, “ it is like the master and his servants.” “ Just so,” replied Mr. Joslin. “ But what is the matter,”

exclaimed Philip, "at the bottom part of the hive? Look! look! I do think that some of the bees are quarrelling. Yes, it must be so; and I think some of them are pulling a bee towards the door; and now they have pushed him quite out at the door, and he has fallen down on the ground. I think he seems killed. No, he begins to crawl, but very slowly, and I do not think he can get up again. And now, I declare, here is another fallen down. Pray, Sir, tell me, what does this mean?"

"I conclude," replied Mr. Joslin, "that the bees you have just seen turned out of the hive, are two that, from some cause or other, are not able to work; and the bees will not allow any one that does not work to remain in the hive." "Indeed!" said

Philip. "Yes," continued Mr. Joslin, "and if you were to watch here in the autumn, you would see the working bees turn out a number of dark-coloured ones, that are called drones; and they lie on the ground and die." "Do they?" said Philip; "and do none of the other bees bring them a little honey?" "No, certainly not: why should they?" said Mr. Joslin. "The drones are lazy, and will not work to support themselves; and the bees cannot afford to supply them with honey, as they would not then have a sufficient store for themselves and their queen during winter. Now can you tell me, Philip, if these drones remind you of any body you know?" "Yes," answered Philip; "they make me think of Ned Dawson, the labourer you turned away

lately, because you said he was idle, and you could not afford to pay a man who would not work." "True, I did so," said Mr. Joslin. "Though the corn that I sell, and other profits, bring me in a good deal of money, yet I am obliged to be careful of it, as I have many demands for it; that is, I have many people to pay: and I could not have this nice garden you so much admire, nor bees, nor a great many other pleasures and comforts, if I were not diligent myself, and did not see that those I employed were so likewise. Now tell me, is there no one else you have ever met with, who makes you think of these drones?" "Yes, there is, Sir; for I was just recollecting about Patty Hills, whom my mistress says is such

an idle girl, she cannot keep her. She is always lolling out of the window, looking up the road; and is never up in time to milk the cows, and does not get the butter churned for breakfast, and"—

"There, stop, stop—not so fast—that will do," interrupted Mr. Joslin. "I was not thinking of Patty Hills, nor of Ned Dawson; but of another idle person about my farm, who, like the drones, is ready to eat the honey he will not work for. He is now not very far from me: cannot you guess whom I mean?"

Philip considered for a minute, and then, colouring exceedingly, said, "I am afraid you mean me: do you, Sir?" "Why, what do you think?" said his master.

Just at this moment one of the

labourers came down the ground, to speak to Mr. Joslin. The man remained some minutes talking to him. When he had finished, the farmer turned to look for his little companion, but Philip was gone.

Mr. Joslin did not sit down again by the bee-hives, but he went into the house, to look over his accounts, and get some money ready to pay his different workmen. In the mean time, what had become of Philip? and what had become of his headache and his fatigue? Why, the instant Mr. Joslin made him understand that he resembled the lazy drones, he was struck with a sense of shame, and he felt how true indeed it was. He was ready to enjoy all the good things of this life, but unwilling to take his share of labour. He seized

his hoe, made all the haste he could back to the field, and worked hard till late in the evening. His resolution was taken, and he determined to be idle no longer. The next morning he was up and in the field at his business, before any of the other boys, and he continued diligently working all day. He did not mind the heat; he did not think about being tired; nor did he leave off to play, or to go and rest under the shade of the large oak-tree, but kept on now with his employment. It is true that he now and then paused a moment, to look over the fields, to see if his master was coming; for he very much wished that he should see that he was not idle now, and that he could work: besides, he felt grateful to him for his good-nature, and for the gentle

reproof he had given him, instead of being angry with him for his idleness. But Philip watched in vain; for a whole week passed away and he did not appear, as he had been obliged to go to London on business. At the end of that time he returned, and after asking his looker different questions, he enquired how the boys had gone on in his absence; and he was informed that Philip had been by far the best-behaved of the set, and had done the most work.

The morning after his return, Mr. Joslin went into the field. Philip was hoeing; and he stood some time looking on, without the boy's observing him, he was so intent on his occupation. "What, Philip," at length he said, "are you grown so fond of work that you cannot spare a moment's time to speak

to a friend." Philip looked up, and was rejoiced to see his master's good-natured face regarding him with pleasure and approbation. "I have heard a good account of you during my absence, Philip. Good boy! you have now, in a great measure, overcome the habit of being idle." Go on in this way, and let me see that you have steadiness always to persevere in the manner you have begun; for many weeks must pass in this way, before I can be certain that you have acquired steadiness of character: by that I mean, before I can be certain that you will not be diligent sometimes, and sometimes be idle, just as the whim seizes you. Besides, the weather has been cooler for the last few days."

“ O, Sir,” said Philip, “ it is all one to me now, about what sort of weather it is. I shall never be lazy any more. You shall see that I will never change again.” And Philip kept his word. He became the most useful, active boy on the farm, or indeed in the whole village : besides which, he was good-natured and obliging to every one ; for it is always those who make the best use of their own time, who have the most to be of service to others. If his mistress wanted a boy to go on an errand to the neighbouring town, she always desired to have Philip ; for he always went quickly, never stopping by the way ; and he always remembered well what he was told. And when his master wanted a trusty messenger, he was sure to employ

Philip, for he said he could always depend upon him.

Matters went on thus for between three and four months, when, one fine afternoon in the latter end of September, Mr. Joslin sent for Philip into his parlour, to speak to him. Philip found his master sitting after dinner with a jug of ale, a basket of fine ripe filberts, and a plate of cakes. Philip's eyes sparkled when he likewise beheld, lying across the table, a handsome new bat, all white and shining, with a bright red string round the handle.

“Come here, Philip,” said his master, “and tell me if you like cricket as well as you used to do.”

“O dear, yes, that I do! Indeed, since I have worked more, I seem to like it better than ever.”

“Then I suppose you have just the same wish to have a bat of your own. Here, take this: it is for you—you deserve it. But I do not give it you merely as a reward for your good behaviour. I consider that since you have been so diligent, you have earned half-a-crown more than I pay your father for your services. Now sit down with me, and eat some of these nuts and cakes; and when we have done eating, I will go with you to the village-green, and see you play with your new bat. I will tell your companions how you came by it; and they, I am sure, will agree with me, (at least all the good boys will,) that it is much better to spend time in earning half-a-crown, than in searching about to find one.”

THE EARTH.

THIS earth that we inhabit is not a flat surface, but is round like an orange; and trees grow, and our houses stand, and we live and move, as it were, on the outside of a ball. The sun and the moon are round bodies: they appear to hang in the air. Just so does our earth. And if there are people in the moon, our world looks to them as their moon does to us, only larger; for the earth is more than three times bigger than the moon. All the planets, that we see shining so beautifully of a night, are so many worlds, and are supposed to contain inhabitants. What a wonderful idea does this give us of the power and greatness of God!

THE LION.

THE lion is mentioned in the Bible. David, in the Psalms, speaks of the ramping and the roaring lion, which goes about seeking whom he can devour. The lion is not found in England: it is a native of much hotter countries. It is an exceedingly strong, fierce animal; and, when pressed with hunger, will attack every animal that comes in its way. It devours human beings. The lion lives to a great age, nearly one hundred years. Each lioness produces but two or three young ones in the course of her life. Thus it is wisely ordained by Providence, that so destructive an animal should not increase fast,

as do pigs, hares, and other animals, which are useful to mankind.

CLEANLINESS.

EVERY child, however poor, can have a clean face and hands. Wash yourselves regularly every morning, and comb your hair : this will show, at least, a tidiness of disposition. Nothing has a worse appearance than a dirty skin and tangled hair. Keep your hair cut short : this will make it much easier to keep the head clean ; and besides, it has a much neater look than long, lank locks, hanging like so many rats' tails down the back.

*The blood of Jesus Christ was shed
for us.*

CHILDREN, these words you have often both heard and read; but have you ever considered their importance? have you ever attached any serious meaning to them? Or have they not passed through your ears without making a deep impression on your minds? I will ask you another question: If you were to consent to have your arm cut off, to save the life of a friend, should you not think that you had done him a very great favour, and that he ought to feel exceedingly obliged to you; and should you not be always thinking that he never could do enough to make you amends

for your great kindness to him? But, great as you might consider such a sacrifice, it would be nothing compared to what Jesus Christ has made for you. He left heaven, and all its joys and happiness, to pass a life of sorrow and suffering upon earth, and to endure a most painful and shameful death. Jesus Christ was crucified. Picture him to yourselves, stripped of his clothing, and extended on the cross. Fancy the large nails which were run through his hands and feet. Think of the crown of thorns that was placed on his head, and imagine their sharp points running into his flesh. Reflect, that in this state he remained, till, at length, nature was exhausted, and, uttering a deep groan, he expired. Forget not the soldier's spear that was thrust into the side of

our Saviour, from which wound there came forth blood and water. And remember that his blood was shed for you. Remember that all this happened to save you from a life, after this world is over, of never-ending pain. Do you think that you can ever be sufficiently grateful to such a friend? Or, let me ask, are you grateful at all? and do you show your love and gratitude to him by keeping his commandments?

These are questions of the greatest importance: meditate, therefore, seriously upon them. And, for the future, never allow yourselves to hear those impressive words, *the blood of Jesus Christ was shed for us*, without recalling to your mind the immense sacrifice he made for your sakes.

THE PURSE OF MONEY.

“JANE,” said Tom Williams, one afternoon, to his little girl, “you must go with a message for me to the next town. You must go to Dr. Pancras, in the market-place, and tell him that I cannot bring the load of hay before Thursday: master will not be able to let him have it before. And now go quickly: do not loiter on the way, but make haste back.”

Jane put on her bonnet and handkerchief, and set off directly. She went down a long lane, across several fields, till she got to the high road, which led to the town: she kept steadily on till she came to the street where the doctor lived. The servant

was standing at the door and having delivered her message, she turned back again. She passed quickly on, never stopping to look at the pretty things that hung in the shop-windows; nor yet did she wait one moment, to listen to an organ a man was playing, or to look at the monkeys he had, which were dressed in little scarlet coats, with cocked hats on their heads.

It was a very warm afternoon, and as Jane got near home, she began to feel tired; and when she entered the shady lane, she would have liked to rest on some one of the hillocks by the green bank-side. It was the spring of the year. The thrush and the blackbird were singing sweetly; and the nightingale, in a neighbouring grove, had just begun

his evening song.' The woodbine smelt sweetly, and the hedges were full of wild roses. Jane admired their bright pink blossoms, and longed to gather a bunch; but she remembered her father's words, "do not stop by the way," and kept on, turning her eyes on the ground, that she might not see the flowers.

Just as she got to the end of the lane, she spied something red lying in the path; and stooping down to pick it up, she discovered it to be a new red-leather purse: and just just peeping into it, what was her delight to perceive a great deal of money! She flew home with her prize. "See here, father! mother! do look," said she, "what I have found." "A purse of money!" exclaimed her parents: "one guinea,

two guineas, six shillings, and a new sixpence." "Why, what a lucky chance!" continued her father: "now I can buy a pig." "And I," cried Jane, "can go to school: there is money now to pay for me."

The mother began to bustle quickly about, to get supper ready; and the father, in high spirits, kept reckoning how much the first cost of the pig would be; how much food it would take to fatten it; and what, in the end, would be his profits.

"Come Jane, come child," said her mother, as she placed a dish of hot greens and a little piece of pork on the table; "come to supper: you deserve a good meal for your luck." But Jane did not hear her mother speak, for she was standing, lost in thought, just in the same spot where

her father had counted the money. After her first glee was over, a sudden thought struck Jane—was the money theirs? It was true that she had found it, but ought she not to try and discover the right owner. Jane, for a long time past, had been very much wishing to go to school. The little girl who lived at the next cottage, though she was only half a year older, could stitch and make button-holes, and mark very neatly; and it was Jane's great ambition to be likewise a good workwoman; but when she asked her mother, which was very often, to put her to school, she was always told that there was a large family, and no money could be spared; but that when times were better, then she should go. But weeks and months passed on, and

times never mended ; till at last Jane was beginning to despair of obtaining her favourite object, when she found the purse of money. It certainly was a struggle in Jane's mind, between right and wrong ; but right at last prevailed. And when her mother again called her to supper, and asked her why she stood there dreaming, she went up to the table, and told all that had been passing in her mind.

“ Why, what ails the girl ! ” said her mother. “ What a simpleton ! ” exclaimed her father. “ Why, you found the money, and have a right to it : to be sure you have. Come, sit down and eat your supper, and don't be a fool.”

Some time ago the remarks of her parents would have silenced Jane's

conscience ; but it was not so now. For the last year she had attended a Sunday-school, and she had there learned to be honest, and to speak the truth ; and she knew that, if she kept the money, she should be doing very wrong.

Unfortunately, Tom Williams and his wife had had but small advantages of education in their youth, (except that Williams had been taught to read well,) and though by no means depraved characters, they had not a proper sense of religion. The wife loved her husband and children ; yet, as she was not a good manager, the house was generally dirty, and the children almost always ragged. Tom did not naturally love drinking ; but he often drank a pint, as he frequently went to the alehouse, to be

out of the dirt and noise of his own home. Money was a great object with them both; and they were sorry that Jane would not consent to keep the contents of the purse. Still, in their hearts, they felt their child was right; and after a little more persuasion, they gave up the point, and allowed her to do as she pleased.

The little girl had seated herself, in compliance with her mother's order, but she could not eat; and having once determined on what was right, could not rest till she sought to restore the lost property. Rising from her unfinished supper, "I must go directly," said she, "down into the village, and enquire among the neighbours if they have any of them met with a loss." So saying, she took up the treasure and ran off.

Her father called her back, and told her that, if she would go, she had better leave the purse, and before she gave it up, make the person who laid claim to it say what were the contents; as, by that means, no one would obtain unfair possession. Jane felt the sense of her father's advice, and, giving the purse into his charge, again set off. She had not proceeded far, when she observed a young man, dressed as a gentleman's servant, coming up the village, walking very slowly, and looking earnestly on the ground: so that he would have passed Jane without seeing her, if she had not spoken to him. "Pray, Sir," said she, "have you lost any thing?" "Indeed I have," replied he: "I have met with what, to me, is a great loss—a purse with money in it."

How much?" enquired Jane. The man made no reply, but, with a sorrowful countenance, kept on searching on the ground. Jane repeated her question; but still he did not appear to hear her. So she went up to him, and pulled him by the sleeve, to make him attend to her. The young man now looked up, and struck with Jane's flushed and anxious look, he hoped that she might, perhaps, know something of his money; and, replying to her question, told her that there were two guineas, six shillings in silver, and a new sixpence, in the purse, when he lost it. "Then," said Jane, joyfully, "I have found it, and it is safe at home; and I will give it you directly, if you will come with me."

Jane ran on first, and brought the purse; and she thought she had never felt so happy in her life, as when the young man repeated his thanks, and called her an honest, good little girl; and told her that she had spared him a great deal of sorrow, for that the two guineas were what he had, with great difficulty, saved out of his year's wages, to give to his father, who was a very old man, who could not work now, and had a great dread of being sent to the work-house. "But that, he never shall," said the son, "as long as I am blessed with health and strength to help to earn a maintenance for him. I am just come down from London to see him, my master having been so kind as to give me leave of absence for two days. I had got

nearly to his cottage-door, and was feeling for my present, when, to my great grief, I found it was gone; and I was returning, with scarcely a hope of finding it, when I was so happy as to meet you. These six shillings I shall want to pay for my lodging here, and my expences back; but this sixpence, my dear, I will give you, with my best wishes for all prosperity to you, and my warm thanks for the favour you have done me. I wish it was in my power to give you more: at present it is not; but I shall not soon forget you. Good bye. I must now go to my poor father."

"How happy he is!" said Jane, as she looked after him and saw he bounded along, with the quick step of youth and health; "and how happy I am!

Ah! I should not have felt thus, if I had kept the money."

The same evening, as soon as Jane had assisted in putting her younger brothers and sisters to bed, she stepped into the next cottage, which was only separated from hers by a narrow slip of garden. Every leisure minute that Jane had, she passed at Mrs. Dale's; for she loved to be there. There was in her neighbour's house much that interested and amused her. She liked to look at the pretty yellow canary, in its bright gilt cage, and to hear its cheerful song. She admired the fine large geraniums that stood in deep red pots, in a row along the window-stool; and she used daily to watch the progress of their beautiful pink and scarlet blossoms. The chairs and

table were polished and shining: there was no rubbish or litters on the mantel-shelf: the cups and saucers, clean washed, were placed ready for use: the Bible, and a few other books, were all laid together in one place; and at each end stood, by way of ornament, two bright brass candlesticks, in one of which was a bunch of everlasting flowers, in the other a few large wheat-ears, with their stalks curiously platted together. Above all, Jane liked to see Mrs. Dale's good-humoured, pleasant face, and to watch how quickly and well she worked. She was always kind and good-natured to her; and Jane observed that, though she had many little children, she never looked cross at them, or scolded them. To be sure, they were as different as possible

from the little creatures at home ; for they were always neat and clean, and were hardly ever heard to cry ; and when their mother spoke to them, they always minded directly, which Jane thought an excellent thing, as it spared a great deal of trouble, and scolding, and beating. But the principal charm to Jane at Mrs. Dale's was, her being there improved in work ; for her neighbour, finding how anxious she was to learn, kindly gave her some instruction. But Jane's progress was very slow ; for, from not having been properly taught at first, she had many bad habits to break herself of ; and as Mrs. Dale took in needle-work, she was often much pressed for time, and could attend but very little to her. And very often, when Jane had stepped away

from home, and had laid out her work, and had just seated herself in her favourite place, by Mrs. Dale's little round deal table, she heard her mother's voice, calling out, "Jane, Jane, the baby is awake; you must come and take her up;" or, "Jane, you must go and fetch some water;" or, "Jane, you must run down to the shop."

Jane was never cross at these interruptions; but they made her wish, more than ever, that she could go to school. Jane told her friend her little adventure, and ran home as gay as a lark; for Mrs. Dale had said she should not be very busy on the morrow, and that she would go on teaching her to mark. Accordingly, the next day, after doing all her mother required, and nursing the baby to

sleep, she hastened off with her work ; but she was hardly seated, when a young woman, with a large bundle under her arm, entered the cottage. “Mrs. Dale,” said she, “I have brought you some mourning to make up: the young ladies have lost their grandfather, and must have their black dresses by Friday morning, early. Can you get them done?” Mrs. Dale replied, that she thought she could. “Here are the materials,” continued the maid, “and these are the patterns ; but I see I have brought you no black silk. O dear ! what shall I do ? I am so tired, I cannot come back ; besides, I am full of business, and there is no one I can send.”

“Shall I run down to the shop,” asked Jane, “and get some there?”

“ Yes, do ; there’s a good child,” replied the maid. Jane went, and soon returned, saying that she could procure no black silk. “ Then, my dear, come along with me, will you ? and bring some back.”

Jane was always ready to oblige, particularly when it was any thing to assist her good friend ; and Mrs. Dale having said she should be much obliged if she would, she ran and asked her mother’s leave to go, and, the baby being asleep, she consented. Jane made all the haste she could, there and back, and hoped still to have an opportunity of going on with her marking ; but the loud cries of the baby, as she passed by, on her return with the silk, informed her that, at present, there was no peace for her.

She hastened to quiet the infant ; but there was so much for her to do all day, that it was late in the evening before she could find a moment's time to step into her neighbour's. When she did, she found Mrs. Dale very busy at her work, making the most of the declining day-light. Jane drew out her little piece of marking ; but she had not taken more than two or three stitches in the letter she was making, before she came to a stand. It was in vain that she sat puzzling : she could not make it out, and her friend was too much engaged to spare a minute to tell her : indeed, Jane forbore to ask, knowing how engaged she was. So she put up her work, and remained for some time, silently looking on at the rapid progress that was making in one of the

dresses. “How quickly you do work!” at length exclaimed Jane; “and Sally, I think you say, will soon work as quickly as you. How is it, I wonder, that you can afford to send her, and James, and Joe, all to school? for you say that your husband does not get such good wages as my father, as he is not so strong; and you have one more in family than we have. But I suppose you earn a great deal of money by your nice work.” “One week with another, about four shillings,” replied Mrs. Dale. “And then,” continued Jane, “there is old Mrs. Dale you are very good to.” “What, my husband’s mother?” said Mrs. Dale. “We cannot afford to do much for her: we allow her a shilling a week.” “Then I suppose,” said Jane, “you are not better off than

we are.” “Much about the same, I should suppose,” replied Mrs. Dale. “Then I cannot think,” said Jane, “why my mother cannot put me to school. But she is always saying that we are so poor; and I do, indeed, think that we look very poor. I wish I knew how it is; and I wish we looked as neat as you do, and that our house was as tidy. And I do wish that I could go to school; for I think,” continued she, sighing, “I shall never learn to work at home.” “Wishing alone,” observed Mrs. Dale, “will never obtain what you want.” “But,” asked Jane, “what else can I do? I always desire to help my mother as much as I can, and try to do all she bids me.” “I know,” replied Mrs. Dale, “that you are a very ready, obliging little girl;

but that is not all that is necessary. And though you are quite young, not much more than nine years old, still much may be done to increase the comfort and economy of a family, by a child of nine, provided she be clever and willing. The first step towards getting money, is to save what you have ; I mean, by taking care of every thing that money has been spent to purchase. For instance, the clothes you wear ; the cups, saucers, and plates that you eat out of ; in short, every thing that is made use of in a family. But it is getting so dark, I can hardly see : will you light me a candle ?”

Jane immediately got on a stool, to reach one off a shelf ; but, in jumping down, a hole in her frock caught against a hook in the wall, and she

fell, stool, candle, and all, on to the ground. She was not hurt ; and, laughing at her accident, she blew the wood-embers to obtain a light, and placed the candle on the table by Mrs. Dale.

“ You know, Jane, my favourite saying, of *a stitch in time saves nine* ; and I have often advised your running up many a slit in your clothes, and you have always done as I told you ; but you should now think of such things for yourself. I rather think—for I did not see, I only think—that if there had not been a hole in my little friend’s frock, just now, she would not have had that fall. Let me see. O yes ! look at that large, three-cornered rent ! and now, I recollect, that was there some days ago : was it not ? ”

“ Why, yes : I tore it on Saturday, jumping over a hedge.”

“ And now, the next time you go into the wood to gather sticks, the piece will be caught, and left hanging on the first bush you come to ; and then, whenever your mother wants to send you to a decent person’s house in the town, your Sunday-frock must be put on. And often there is not time to change it when you come back, so that is soon made as bad as the other ; and then you must either go without, or a new frock must be bought. You are very anxious to mark and stitch, and do fine work. Now all that is very useful, but there is other work that is more useful still ; and though I promise to instruct you as much as I am able, if, when you are waiting

for my being at leisure, instead of leaning over the paling, or standing watching at my door, you would take and mend your own and your sister's clothes, it would be a great saving of expence; and I will always try and fix a patch for you, till you have learned to do it yourself."

"I will begin directly," said Jane. "It is too late now," said Mrs. Dale: "set about it in the morning. Besides, I want to tell you of another thing, in which you may make a great saving." "Can I, indeed!" exclaimed Jane: "pray, what is it?" "The most invaluable of all possessions," answered Mrs. Dale, "I mean, time. By a proper management of time, it is surprising what even a little girl may do." "I think," observed Jane, "that a great deal of my time is spent in running to the shop in the village."

“ Yes, that is just what I was thinking of. Your mother calls you to go for an ounce of tea, and you are hardly back before I see you running away for a quarter of a pound of sugar ; and then presently you are off again for a piece of soap, or a little starch : and if, in the evening, I look out of the window as I sit at work, there comes my little girl with a candle dangling from her finger, or a loaf of bread under her arm. Now, all these errands might be fetched at once ; and, as the shop is at least half a quarter of a mile off, that would be a great saving of time.” “ But what can I do ? it is my mother who sends me.” “ Yes, I know it is. But now tell me, what do you do first in the morning ?” “ I wash and dress myself ; and, when I have said my

prayers, I learn my lessons for Sunday." "Very well: that I think you do before the rest of the family, except your father, are up." "Yes," replied Jane, "for that is the only time I am sure of; and I am trying hard for a prize." "Well, then, I suppose, you dress the little ones," continued Mrs. Dale. "Yes; and after that I get breakfast ready." "What do you generally have for breakfast?" "Bread, or bread and butter, and water, with sometimes a little milk, and now and then gruel. Mother always has tea, with a little brown sugar." "And I suppose you have pretty much the same for dinner and supper." "Yes, except when we now and then have a piece of pork, or a little bit of meat." "Well then, we will say, that what is generally

wanted for food in the course of the day, is, bread, butter, tea, and sugar. Now, before you begin to get breakfast, suppose you were to look and see if there be bread and butter enough for the day ; and take notice if there is a piece of soap or a candle wanted.” “ So I will ; but what then ? ” “ Why, before your mother sits down to breakfast, tell her what is wanted, and ask if you shall fetch every thing at once. Do you see that little basket hanging up yonder ? Take it home with you, and tell your mother I lent it, to take with you to the shop. Sally has one just like it, that I bid her take when she goes there of a morning for me. Now this saving of time will be the means of making another saving.” “ Will it ? ” “ Yes ; as you are sent

off at a moment's notice, you have not time to put the breakfast and dinner things out of the reach of your little brothers and sisters: so that very often, as soon as you are gone, while I am sitting still here at work, I first hear a crash, then loud screams; by which I know that a plate or basin has been broken, and a child been whipped. Now, if these things were put away before you went out, neither of these disasters would happen: money would not have to go for more crockery, nor a child be beaten."

Mrs. Williams's voice was now heard, calling to Jane to come to bed; so, wishing her neighbour good night, she ran home, longing for the morning to put her plan into execution. Accordingly, the next day, as

soon as she had lit the fire and put the kettle on, she looked to see what was wanted, told her mother, and asked if she should fetch every thing at once. She consented; and as she happened to be particularly busy that day, she felt so much the advantage of having Jane always at hand, that she was glad to find that she continued the same practice every morning.

Jane's next undertaking was, keeping her own and her brother's and sister's clothes more tidy; but this was a much harder thing to accomplish. The children were rude and unmanageable; and Jane, sometimes laughing, but oftener ready to cry, frequently said, that she thought the more she mended, the more they de-

stroyed. However, by the end of the summer, as they had several times appeared with their clothes well patched, they began rather to lose the name of *the ragged family*, by which they were known in the village.

Early in the autumn, one evening, as Jane was putting some of the little ones to bed, she heard a man's voice, enquiring if Jane Williams was at home; and opening the casement to look out, she saw Robert Brown, the young man whose purse she found, standing below.

“How are you, Jane?” said he. “Do not come down: I cannot stop a moment. I only called to bring you this handkerchief, as a little token of remembrance; and to tell you that I hope we shall now often

meet ; for my master has taken the Hall, that large house close by, and we are coming down next week to live there. I must now run and tell this good news to my poor father. So good bye, for the present."

One day, a short time after her arrival in the country, as Mrs. Villars, Robert's mistress, was walking in the garden, she called to him and said : " I hear, Robert, that this is your native village. Do you think that you could find me an active little girl, who would come for a short time every morning, to weed these flower-beds ? But she must be an honest girl ; for I should not like to lose any of my fine fruit. Those peaches and nectarines are just ripe ; and I could not always be by to watch her."

“ I think, ma'am,” replied Robert, “ that I know of a child that will suit you exactly. I have had proof that she is honest.”

Robert then mentioned Jane Williams, for it was of her he thought, and he told his mistress the history of the purse. When he had finished, Mrs. Villars said, “ Yes, I think I may trust her ; and, if she likes to come, I will give her sixpence a week.”

In the evening, when her friend Robert told Jane that she might earn some money, she could hardly believe that he was in earnest, so great was her joy. Sixpence a week too ! Just enough to pay the school-mistress for teaching working and reading.

“ I hope I shall please the lady,” said Jane ; “ but when may I begin ?”

“My mistress expects you to-morrow, if you can come,” replied Robert. “Oh, I can come! I may go: may I not, father? You can spare me a little while, cannot you, mother?” “Yes,” said her father, “you may go. I should be glad if I had another child who could earn something towards her maintenance; for times are hard now, for a poor man.” “And it may be for her advantage,” added her mother, “to be employed by a lady.”

The following morning Jane was at the Hall exactly at the time fixed. She found the lady in the garden, who pointed to a flower-border, and said, “This is where I want you to work. You will weed from this white stick to yonder rose-bush: that will be

enough for one morning. When you have finished it, you may go home; but mind and be careful that you do not pull up any of the flowers."

Jane went to work very carefully; but, as her occupation was new to her, she got on very slowly. However, the next day, and the next, she did better; and, by the end of a month, she worked both quickly and well."

Mrs. Villars was generally working in the garden; and every morning, when the weather was fine, she used to have a favourite squirrel brought in its cage, and set upon the lawn before the house; and when her mistress gave leave, Jane used to be very much amused to see it enjoying itself in the sun, as it sat eating its nuts. One day, just as Jane was coming by, the squirrel made its escape out of

the cage-door, which had not been properly fastened. Mrs. Villars, who was watching her favourite from the window, called loudly to the servants to run and catch it; but Jane, who had seen what had happened, darted after it, over the lawn, down the gravel-walk, into the kitchen-garden, and through the gooseberry-ground, where, just as it was about to make a spring up a plum-tree, she caught hold of it, and carried back her little prize and put it safely into the cage, fastening tight the door.

“Thank you, Jane,” said her mistress: “I am very much obliged to you. I should have been grieved to have lost that little animal, for it was the present of a brother who is now dead. But look, your frock is all torn! I doubt it is quite spoiled.

Stay there a minute." Jane waited, and in a short time Mrs. Villars returned, with a bundle in her hand. "Here, take this: it is a gown of mine, which will cut up and make you a good strong frock. Now go home; set about making it; and when finished, put it on, and come to me, to let me see it."

When the frock was finished, Jane set out in her new dress to thank her mistress, who thought it fitted very well. "Now tell me," said she, "what is it I owe you: you have worked for me five weeks, I think, and I agreed to give you sixpence a week: that will be half-a-crown; and as I have always found you honest and diligent, I will add another shilling. But what do you intend doing with your money?" "If you please,

ma'am," replied Jane, "I wish to go to school, and intend paying the mistress with it." "Very well; that is a very proper way of spending it," observed Mrs. Villars; "and now I recollect that Robert told me you were very desirous of going to school, and that, if it had been right, you would have liked to have expended part of his money for that purpose; and with the rest your father desired to purchase a pig: was it not so?" "Yes, ma'am," replied Jane; "but"——"But," interrupted Mrs. Villars, "you knew that it would have been a dishonest action to have kept the money. You were quite right; and you will find that it is most profitable to be honest, even in this world. I am now going from home for some time; but when I again want a little gardener," con-

tinued Mrs. Villars, smiling good-naturedly as she spoke, "I will send for you; that is, if you continue to be a good girl."

On her way back, Jane counted her money again and again, hardly able to believe that she was worth three shillings and sixpence, and of her own earning too. But Jane's joy soon gave place to sorrow; for, on her return, a sad scene awaited her. Her poor father had just been brought home with his leg broken. He had been stacking corn, and had fallen from a great height, on to a piece of timber. A surgeon was sent for, and the limb set; but Williams suffered great pain, and, as he was inclined to be feverish, medicine was ordered, and he was desired to be kept quite quiet. He was laid on a small bed,

in an inner room down stairs ; and at night, as the baby and youngest boy were both very unwell, a little mattress was laid on the floor for Jane, that she might be ready to wait on her father, or call her mother if she was wanted ; for the sick children could not be left, and their cries would have disturbed the poor man. For the first few days he continued to suffer sadly, and his nights were restless and very painful. But he did not lie awake alone ; for, whenever he moved, he heard the voice of his kind child, as she raised herself in bed, enquiring if she could do any thing for him, or if she could come and give him his medicine, or a cup of cold water. But bodily pain was not the only suffering he had to endure : he was unhappy in his mind.

He felt what a heavy blow his accident was upon his family. The scanty allowance of the parish would hardly maintain them, and he must deny himself any little comforts that would have made his situation more bearable. He belonged to no friendly club; he had no little store of money laid up in the saving-bank, as many of his fellow-labourers had; and he thought, with grief, how his excellent wages were regularly squandered away. His wife was always asking him for money. Bitterly did he now lament her waste and extravagance; and, after all, not to have even tolerable comfort in his home, but that his wife and children were the most untidy persons in the parish; and as to his house, it was the dirtiest to be met with in all the country round!

Jane's leisure time was now all passed in the sick room of her father. She sat by his bed-side, and when he was not in too much pain, she used to talk to him, and tell him all she did and heard at the Sunday-school; and as he appeared to like to hear about it, she one day asked him if she should read some of her little books. Jane had had several presents made her, of histories of good little boys and girls; and as she had read them many times to herself, she was quite perfect in them: and they amused her father, who felt his mind soothed by listening to these pictures of early virtue. When Jane had finished her last story, and had nothing more to read, she said, "Father, I wish I could read well enough to

read the Bible to you; for I heard one of the ladies at the Sunday-school say, that, of all things, that was what afforded a sick person the most comfort." Just as she said this, Jane was called away; but the observation she had repeated, sunk deep into her father's heart; and when she returned, he desired her to fetch the Bible. "Ask your mother where it is: I cannot tell you where to find it. I have too long neglected that first of books." Jane found the Bible, and wiping away the dust and cobwebs, she brought it to her father, who immediately read several chapters in the New Testament.

That night Williams rested better, and the following morning he waked about the time Jane got up; but as he was tolerably free from pain, he

lay quite quiet, and she thought he still slept; for she could not see if his eyes were open, as the part of the room where his bed stood was very dark, a shutter having been put up at night since his illness, and it was only through a small opening at the top that the light of the rising day was admitted. So Jane moved about the room on tip-toe; and when she went out to wash and dress, she opened and shut the door with the greatest care. On her return, Jane brought her lessons to learn; and carrying a little stool to the light part of the room, she placed her books on it, and knelt down to say her prayers. And as the beams of the bright morning sun fell on her head and her uplifted hands, her father prayed that God would bless

his good and dutiful child, with more earnestness than he had done for many years before.

The next day, being Sunday, Jane was at the school. Sadly did her father miss his little nurse; and he was beginning to think it the longest day he had ever passed, when, about six in the evening, the door was softly opened, and he saw Jane's little smiling face peeping in. "I am not asleep, love; come in," said Williams. "I am glad you are returned." "And I, father, am very glad too, for I have got all my tickets; and one of the ladies has been so kind as to lend me some more little books. Shall I read you a story now?" "Yes, do, my dear," said her father: "I should like it very much." Jane began at the first in the book, but as they

were new to her, she did not read it so well as she did the others; but her father was very attentive. It happened to be the history of a man who brought great distress on his family by going to the ale-house, and at last turned out a complete drunkard. In the course of the story, Williams many times sighed deeply; and when it was ended, he exclaimed, "I am no drunkard; I hate drinking; and I never would have gone to the ale-house, if I had not been driven there by the dirt and noise of my own family. Hark! do you hear that crying, and scolding, and riot now? Surely nobody ever had such disorderly children. Go, Jane, and put them to bed." Jane did so; but when she came back, as she found

her mother sitting with her father, she just stepped into Mrs. Dale's.

The family at the next cottage had been at evening prayer, and the children were going off quietly to bed, as Jane entered. She was eager to tell of her success at school, as she knew her kind neighbour would rejoice with her. She then mentioned the story she had been reading, and what her father had said about going to the ale-house, and about the noise and disturbance that the children made; and then she said, she wondered what could make her little brothers and sisters so different from Mrs Dale's children. "I do wish," continued she, "that they were as good and as quiet; then father would stop at home. I always was sorry when he went out; and now he is so

very good-natured to me, I shall be still more sorry. Besides, he has promised to hear me read now and then. What can be done?" "Your sister, next to you," replied her friend, "is now old enough to behave better. You should tell her, that if she continues to be so rude and disagreeable, nobody will love her as she grows up, and she will have no one to take care of her; and then she will come to want. She appears to me as though she would listen to reason." "I do think," said Jane, "that she would not be near so bad, if James and Betsey did not make her so; for often, when she is alone with me, she is very good." "Yes, and so would the others be, if they were properly managed; but whenever they cry for any thing, they have it given them

directly. Now, that is what you should never do. They will, perhaps, be a great deal more noisy at first; but after two or three times, they will find they cannot get the better of you, and will give up as soon as they perceive that you are in earnest. Try my plan; for you have more the care of the children than your mother. Now it is time for you to go to bed. Good night, and think of what I have said."

Jane promised that she would; and an opportunity occurred, early the next morning, of putting her new plan into execution. She had a favourite little mug, which had been given her by an uncle, who worked in a china manufactory. It was made of fine clay; and on it was painted a pretty picture of a shepherd's boy,

sitting on a bank, with a basket of flowers in one hand, and a crook in the other: while a lamb, with a blue ribbon tied round its neck, lay at his feet; and over this, in neat black letters, was printed, "A present for my dear Jane." As she used to like to see this mug very often, it was not put away up stairs, but stood on a high shelf, quite, as she thought, out of the reach of the children; but she was mistaken, for coming in, on her return from fetching water, she saw her treasure in the hands of one of the boys, while all the others were contending which should get hold of it. Jane ran forward, and catching hold of the mug, would have carried it off up stairs; but the young ones, who had often tried in vain to get at this pretty painted mug, strongly re-

sisted her taking it away, and begged hard that she would let them have it; when, finding that she still refused, they set up the most piercing screams, declaring, at the same time, that they would have it!

It was fortunate for the success of Jane's first trial, that Mrs. Dale stepped in just at this minute; for the clamour and cries of the urchins were absolutely deafening, and their mother was raising her voice above the storm, saying, "Do, Jane, do give them what they want: any thing for peace and quietness." But Mrs. Dale, seeing at once how the matter stood, went up, and taking the mug out of Jane's hand, said, in a firm manner, and with a look of great displeasure, that Jane had resolved never again to give them what they cried for. Finding

that nothing was to be got by continuing their cries, they soon became quiet, and went off to a different part of the room, to seek for some new amusement; while their mother, appearing quite exhausted, and looking very pale, quitted her washing and sunk down on a chair. "You seem quite unwell, neighbour, this morning," said Mrs. Dale, kindly, to her. "Indeed I feel very much so," replied Mrs. Williams. "My husband's accident, and attending at night upon my sick infant, have affected me greatly; but I should get on pretty well if it was not for those children, for really they quite overpower me, and make me doubt, at times, if children are indeed a blessing." "Oh! neighbour, they are one of the greatest blessings." "Yes, such children as

yours are, or, I may say, as my Jane is.” “ And all the rest might be like them, with a little good management. But we will talk of these things another time. Now do you go and lie down on your bed, and rest yourself a little, while I finish your washing. The water, I see, is hot; and I am quite at leisure, and all shall be finished presently. Nay, neighbour, say nothing about it: it is hard if we cannot help one another a little. You will do as much for me another time, when I need assistance.”

Jane took the infant, and her mother retired for two or three hours, very thankful for this welcome aid.

In the evening, when Mrs. Dale came in again to enquire how she felt, and if she could do any thing else for her, she said, “ No, thank

you, not now; but sit down, and tell me what I shall do to bring my young ones into better order, for I am most willing to be advised by a kind friend like you." Mrs. Dale accordingly gave her some useful hints; and as she took care to see that they were put in practice, the children soon began to behave better, and after a time they minded their mother when she spoke to them, almost as well as the Dales.

In the mean time, poor Williams was confined to his bed; and a weary time he found it. Now and then a neighbour stepped in to speak to him; and one day a fellow-workman brought him, as a present from their mistress, the farmer's wife, where they worked, some very fine white cur-

rants, that had been preserved under a net. As Williams had a good deal of fever, these proved a delicious treat; and in order to prolong it, he took part of them only each day, while they lasted. The morning after they were finished, he bid Jane look if she could not find a bunch or two more. Jane reached the basket, and the eyes of the sick man glistened as she searched among the withered leaves; but none were to be found. "Never mind, dear," said her father, with a sigh, "hang up the basket, and give me a draught of water; and," added he, after a pause, "many a poor soul cannot obtain even that blessing." Jane handed her father the water; then, slipping out of the room, she stepped softly up stairs, and going to a drawer where her clothes were

kept, she opened it, and took from one corner her little packet of money, which lay carefully pinned up in a small piece of linen cloth: she unfolded it, and taking out sixpence, ran out after Sally Dale, who was just crossing the green on her way to school, and giving her the sixpence, asked her to be so good, when she returned in the evening, to bring with her a penny-worth or two of nice fruit. "I want it for my poor father," said Jane; "and he has so much fever, that I intend to get him some fruit every day, as long as my money lasts. And will you, Sally, when you have got it, call me aside? for I am afraid, if my father knew I bought it for him, he would not let me spend my money upon him, because of depriving myself of it; but I would

much rather he had it. And I know, Sally, that I am not doing wrong, for when I first had my money, and my mother said I had better buy a new frock than lay it out in schooling, my father said, "Let the child do as she likes with it: she earned it, and if she likes to purchase toys, or even cakes, she is quite at liberty."

That day Williams complained more than usual of thirst, and Jane ran in and out twenty times, to look at her neighbour's clock. It appeared the longest day she had ever known, and she thought Sally never would return. At length, about six in the evening, the little messenger appeared, coming up the lane, and Jane ran to meet her. "Here is your fruit," said Sally: "I fear you will think it very little for two-pence; but Mr.

Jones says fruit is now getting both scarce and dear." Jane thanked her friend, and saying she was sure she had done the best she could, hastened in with it to her father. "Stop, father," cried she, as she opened his door, "do not drink that water: here is some fruit for you. This seems a nice juicy plum: let me give it you." "Thank you, my dear," said Williams: "it is a fine plum, indeed! but where did this fruit come from? who has been so kind as to send it me?" "Why, that is a secret," said Jane, smiling. "It comes from a friend, who will give you a small quantity every day, for some time; but I cannot tell you who: pray do not ask." "Well, I will not, if you do not like it; but perhaps you will

tell me to-morrow." But the next day, when she was asked, Jane still said that she could not tell; and as Williams found that, by persisting in enquiring, he distressed his kind little girl, he gave it up, especially as her mother, who knew how the fruit had been procured, said, "Jane, as you may be sure, came honestly by it, so do not ask her any more." Her father felt assured that this was the case, and he at last concluded that it was sent to him by a fruiterer in the town, whom he once had an opportunity of obliging.

It was the beginning of winter before Williams was able to leave the house, and then he could walk but a very short distance, and required the support of a stick. But this confinement, which at first had been so irk-

some, proved of the greatest benefit to his mind ; for it had afforded him leisure for reading and repentance. While lying on a bed of sickness, he had thought over his past life, and, from having found fault with his wife, he began to take blame to himself. He reflected how very little he had done his duty by his family. He was many years older than his wife ; but he had never, by kindness and good advice, endeavoured to put her in the right way of managing her family. And his children ! he could not bear to think how he had neglected them : he had shown none of the fostering care of a parent ; and that dear child, Jane, what had he ever done for her ? How had she done her duty towards him ! and what a lesson had she given him ! And he resolved that,

if it should please God once again to give him health and strength, he would do every thing in his power to repair his errors.

Williams would have kept his resolution, even if he had found the task harder than it proved. But on first leaving his sick room, he perceived that a change for the better had already begun to take place. The house was cleaner, the children more orderly, and his wife, who was naturally good-natured, was more cheerful. But still there was much yet to be done—much to amend. Williams's first concern was to read the Bible to his wife, and to bring her to a proper sense of the importance of religion. He assisted in the management of their children: he instructed them, and taught them to

be honest and obedient, and to speak the truth. As to Jane, he heard her say her lessons; and she read to him, regularly, twice a day. "When I go to work again," said he to his wife, "that child shall go to school, even if I toil all night to procure the means of sending her." He entirely left off going to the ale-house: indeed, when, with his wife and children round him, he was seated by a cheerful fire, with the hearth clean swept, reading the Bible aloud, he did not even feel a wish to be there. But there was one thing pressed heavily on his mind. His wife, during his illness, had bought many articles at the village-shop, which were not paid for; and thus a bill had accumulated, not a large one certainly, but, in their circumstances, it must remain a long while

unpaid. As soon as Williams began to work, he laid by every week a portion of his wages, in order to defray the debt ; and his wife, who was now truly sorry for her thoughtless conduct, denied herself tea and sugar, determined not to drink any till the bill was paid. But the spring was far advanced before the debt was discharged ; and as a few other expences had been incurred, Jane had not yet been to school ; however, she no longer looked forward without hope, for she felt very plainly that times were really mending. Indeed, the contrast of her home now was very striking from what it had been formerly ; and Jane never felt the difference more fully than she did when, one very fine evening in the latter end of the spring, she returned

home, after having been sent with a message to the next town. The house was washed clean, and every thing about it was in perfect order. Her father was reading the Bible aloud to her mother, who was seated by the window at work. James was learning his lesson ; Susan was mending her frock ; and the younger children were sitting on the ground, at the further end of the room, amusing themselves with making garlands of wild flowers. They were quite quiet, and only spoke to each other very softly, that they might not interrupt the reading, for they had been bid not to make a noise.

Jane reached down her bag, and seating herself near the open door, took her work ; but as she sat, she now and then raised her head to look

out. The village-green shone brightly in the setting sun, except where it was chequered by the long shadows of the tall elm-trees that grew in the hedge-row opposite. The evening breeze rustled among the leaves, then passed along, bearing with it the sweet fragrance of the blossomed hawthorn and the honeysuckle. Flocks were browsing in the fields; and the soft lowing of cattle afar off, was heard at intervals, amid the distant pealing of church-bells. Every thing was peace within and without. But, after a time, Jane's attention became entirely fixed on an interesting history that her father was reading in the Bible, and even her work fell from her hands, when she was interrupted by a rattling at the gate, accompanied by the loud squeaking of a pig, and

some one calling to know if there was any body at home. Jane looked up, and saw a man standing by the pales, with a string in his hand, one end of which was fastened to a very fine pig. The man beckoned to Jane, at the same time saying, "Come here, my little maid, I have got a letter and a present for you." "For me!" said Jane, joyfully: "for me! did you say?" "A letter for my daughter!" said Williams. "I think, friend, you must be wrong: you must take us for some other people. Are you sure you mean the letter is for Jane." "Yes, yes, I am quite sure that the letter is for yonder little maiden, and the pig too; and now I must make haste back, to fetch some peas and barley-meal. So saying, he fastened the pig

to the gate, and ran off, though Williams called loudly after him, and begged him to stop.

“There must be some mistake here,” said Williams, as he continued examining the letter; “and I am not scholar enough, I am sorry to say, to read what is written on the outside.” “I will run and ask our neighbour to come,” said Jane: “she will soon tell us.” Jane quickly returned, followed by Mrs. Dale. “Come in, neighbour,” said Williams, “come in: we have got a matter here that we cannot understand, without a little of your help.” “What is written here?” said Jane, holding up the letter. “The direction,” answered Mrs. Dale, “is certainly to ‘Jane Williams.’” “Then will you be so good as to read the letter?” asked Jane. Mrs. Dale

took it, and on opening it something fell out. Jane stooped to pick up what had fallen, and, to her great surprise, she found, folded up in a small piece of paper, two bright gold sovereigns. "Why, this is more strange still!" exclaimed her father. "Let us hear what the letter says," said Mrs. Dale; and she read as follows:

"My dear Jane,

"On my return home, last week, I enquired after you, and finding from your friend Robert, that, instead of spending the money you earned on yourself, you preferred procuring with it a small gratification for your sick father, I conclude it will give you pleasure to be able to make him a useful present. I therefore send you, for that purpose, a pig and

half a dozen bushels of peas and barley-meal. The two sovereigns are for yourself; and I desire that they may be spent in paying a school-mistress for instructing you in working and reading. I am going from home again, for a few days; but when I return, you shall receive a visit from your friend,

“ ANN VILLARS.”

For a few moments after reading this letter, every one was silent; but in a minute, Jane clapped her hands, and jumped about for joy. But the feelings of her father quite overcame him. Tears of joy, and affection towards his child, flowed fast down his face, and turning away, he was, for a short time, unable to speak; when, recovering himself, and wiping

away his tears, he called Jane to him. "Come here, my love; come here, and let your father embrace you. Bless you, my child!" said he, as he laid one hand on her head, while he raised the other towards heaven; "may God bless you, and make you happy!—happy as he has made me, in giving me so good and affectionate a child!"

GREEDINESS.

IN former days there was a very worthy old man, who had attained to a great age, free from sickness and infirmity, by leading an abstemious life. Whenever this benevolent

person observed children inclined to be greedy, he would, with a serious voice, exclaim, "EAT TO LIVE; but do not LIVE TO EAT."

This disposition to greediness, so disgusting, and so contrary to the moderation enjoined in the Scriptures, shows itself even in trifles: for instance, some children, if they chance to have a cake or an apple given them, will devour it all instantly, or secrete it for themselves alone; whilst others, of a more kindly and social nature, will double their own pleasure by sharing the treat with their companions. Sensible parents will early check this selfishness in their children; for it is a vice that rapidly increases, and discovers itself at every meal in a most disagreeable manner. "Grace" is scarcely thought of; and

the food to which these greedy creatures sit down, can hardly be supplied fast enough, so voracious do they soon become, cramming the portion before them into their mouths, perhaps swallowing it whole, with eyes fixed, either on another's plate, grudgingly, or on the dish, in hopes of securing, by the greatest speed in eating, the remainder.

To compare such disgusting behaviour to pigs feeding in a sty, where each tramples on the other, to quarrel for the best situation at the trough, is injustice to those animals; for it is a part of their merit to love eating, as they are the sooner fatted and fit to kill, and to become food for others. But a hoggish man, woman, or child, is good for little, either living or dead.

Never! never! children, be like those “whose God is their belly.”

I said of laughter, It is mad; and of mirth, What doeth it?—Ec. ii. 2.

CHILDREN whose minds and tempers are well regulated, are never flighty or boisterous, even in their merriest hours of recreation. Violent laughter and rude gambols are always disagreeable. Besides, it generally happens, that young people of this description are much given to extremes of temper, and, from being very giddy and frolicsome, suddenly change in their humour to fits of passion and violent resentment. So

certain it is, that "HIGH SPIRITS ARE NOT GOOD SPIRITS."

It is very true, that youth is the season for gaiety; and it is a pleasant sight to look at children engaged in innocent recreations, after they have, to the best of their capacity, performed their serious duties; but it is just the contrary to observe children, who but a moment before were in their school-room, apparently attentive and orderly, rush forth, forcing their way through their more gentle companions, like wild animals, just as though it were enjoyment to shake off all decorum—as though they wished to forget that they were reasonable creatures, and accountable for every profane word and every improper action.

There are others, (poor children, I mean,) who are so coarse in their manners, that, in many nameless respects, they do not practise more decency and retirement than the beasts of the field ! Such grossness of conduct must raise a blush of shame on the cheeks of their more modest companions, and a sentiment of great disgust in any other accidental observer.

It does not follow, that, because a little girl is born in a cottage, sleeps hard, fares scantily, and is coarsely clad, that she should be without delicacy, or wanting in modesty and decency of manners.

THE REASONABLE YOUNG LABOURER.

FULL well I know that I am poor,
That scant and homely is my meal,
That cold and want I oft endure,
And suffer what the rich ne'er feel.

Yet I have health and peace of mind,
And youth, and strength, and will to labour :
My wants are few, my heart is kind ;
I love my God, and help my neighbour.

And Nature's bounty all may share:
Sunshine and rain alike are giv'n.
I taste, and smell, and feel, and hear ;
And am, I know, the care of Heav'n.

Blessings so choice, gold cannot buy ;
Not tho' we search'd the world around :
And in our breasts content must lie :
If wanting there—'tis nowhere found.

HYMN.

LORD! who shall dwell above with thee,
Upon thy holy hill?

Who shall those glorious prospects see
That heav'n with gladness fill?

Those happy souls who use this world,
But the next only love;
Who travel thro' the present state,
But place their home above:

In that blest sphere where spirits bright,
Circle in glorious ring,
The sparkling throne of love supreme,
And ceaseless praises sing.

Oh! may we climb those hills of light,
By saints and seraphs trod:
Shake off this cumbrous mortal coil,
And spring to meet our God!

THE END.





